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Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world: the need for a new agenda**

Report of the Secretary-General

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* A/56/150.

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I. Introduction

1. On 20 November 2000, the General Assembly adopted resolution 55/33 C, entitled "Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world: the need for a new agenda", paragraphs 1 to 19 of which read as follows:

"The General Assembly,

"...

"1. *Agrees* on the importance and urgency of signatures and ratifications, without delay and without conditions and in accordance with constitutional processes, to achieve the early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty;

"2. *Calls* for the upholding of a moratorium on nuclear-weapon-test explosions or any other nuclear explosions pending entry into force of the above-mentioned Treaty;

"3. *Agrees* on the necessity for negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament on a non-discriminatory, multilateral and internationally and effectively verifiable treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, in accordance with the report of the Special Coordinator of 1995 and the mandate contained therein, taking into consideration both nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation objectives, and urges the Conference on Disarmament to agree on a programme of work which includes the immediate commencement of negotiations on such a treaty, with a view to their conclusion within five years;

"4. *Agrees also* on the necessity of establishing within the context of the Conference on Disarmament an appropriate subsidiary body with a mandate to deal with nuclear disarmament, and urges the Conference to agree on a programme of work which includes the immediate establishment of such a body;

"5. *Calls* for the principle of irreversibility to apply to nuclear disarmament, nuclear and other related arms control and reduction measures;

"6. *Calls also* for the early entry into force and full implementation of the Treaty on Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms (START II) and the conclusion of START III as soon as possible, while preserving and strengthening the Treaty on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems as a cornerstone of strategic stability and as a basis for further reductions of strategic offensive weapons, in accordance with the provisions of that Treaty;

"7. *Calls further* for the completion and implementation of the Trilateral Initiative between the United States of America, the Russian Federation and the International Atomic Energy Agency;

"8. *Calls* for steps to be taken by all nuclear-weapon States that would lead to nuclear disarmament in a way that promotes international stability and, based upon the principle of undiminished security for all, for:

(*a*) Further efforts to be made by the nuclear-weapon States to reduce their nuclear arsenals unilaterally;

(*b*) Increased transparency by the nuclear-weapon States with regard to nuclear weapons capabilities, and the implementation of agreements pursuant to article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and as a voluntary confidence-building measure to support further progress in nuclear disarmament;

(*c*) The further reduction of non-strategic nuclear weapons, based on unilateral initiatives and as an integral part of the nuclear arms reduction and disarmament process;

(*d*) Concrete agreed measures to reduce further the operational status of nuclear weapons systems;

(*e*) A diminishing role for nuclear weapons in security policies so as to minimize the risk that these weapons will ever be used and to facilitate the process of their total elimination;

(*f*) The engagement, as soon as appropriate, of all the nuclear-weapon States in the process leading to the total elimination of their nuclear weapons;

"9. *Calls also* for arrangements by all nuclear-weapon States to place, as soon as practicable, the fissile material designated by

each of them as no longer required for military purposes under International Atomic Energy Agency or other relevant international verification and arrangements for the disposition of such material for peaceful purposes in order to ensure that such material remains permanently outside military programmes;

"10. *Reaffirms* that the ultimate objective of the efforts of States in the disarmament process is general and complete disarmament under effective international control;

"11. *Calls* for regular reports, within the framework of the strengthened review process for the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, by all States parties on the implementation of article VI of the Treaty and paragraph 4 (c) of the decision on principles and objectives for nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament of the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty, and, in this regard, recalls the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice of 8 July 1996;

"12. *Agrees* to pursue the further development of the verification capabilities that will be required to provide assurance of compliance with nuclear disarmament agreements for the achievement and maintenance of a nuclear-weapon-free world;

"13. *Calls upon* all States not yet party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons to accede to the Treaty as non-nuclear-weapon States, promptly and without condition, in particular those States that operate unsafeguarded nuclear facilities, and also calls upon those States to bring into force the required comprehensive safeguards agreements, together with additional protocols, consistent with the Model Protocol Additional to the Agreement(s) between State(s) and the International Atomic Energy Agency for the Application of Safeguards approved by the Board of Governors of the International Atomic Energy Agency on 15 May 1997, for ensuring nuclear non-proliferation, and to reverse clearly and urgently any policies to pursue any nuclear weapons development or deployment and refrain from any action that could undermine regional and international peace and security and the efforts of the international community towards nuclear disarmament and the prevention of nuclear weapons proliferation;

"14. *Calls upon* those States that have not yet done so to conclude full-scope safeguards agreements with the International Atomic Energy Agency and to conclude additional protocols to their safeguards agreements on the basis of the Model Protocol;

"15. *Notes* the paramount importance of effective physical protection of all nuclear material, and calls upon all States to maintain the highest possible standards of security and physical protection of nuclear materials;

"16. *Notes also* that the 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons agreed that legally binding security assurances by the five nuclear-weapon States to the non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the Treaty strengthen the nuclear non-proliferation regime, and that it called upon the Preparatory Committee to make recommendations on this issue to the 2005 Review Conference;

"17. *Reaffirms* the conviction that the establishment of internationally recognized nuclear-weapon-free zones on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at among the States of the region concerned enhances global and regional peace and security, strengthens the nuclear non-proliferation regime and contributes towards realizing the objective of nuclear disarmament, and supports proposals for the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones where they do not yet exist, such as in the Middle East and South Asia;

"18. *Affirms* that a nuclear-weapon-free world will ultimately require the underpinning of a universal and multilaterally negotiated legally binding instrument or a framework encompassing a mutually reinforcing set of instruments;

"19. *Acknowledges* the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 54/54 G, and requests him, within existing resources, to prepare a report on the implementation of the present resolution."

2. The present report is submitted pursuant to paragraph 19 of resolution 55/33 C.

II. Observations

3. On at least two important occasions last year, the international community underlined that efforts towards the elimination of nuclear weapons remain an important priority. In the Millennium Declaration (resolution 55/2), adopted at the Millennium Summit in September 2000, world leaders resolved to strive for the elimination of weapons of mass destruction, in particular nuclear weapons, and to keep all options open for achieving this aim, including the possibility of convening an international conference of identifying ways of eliminating nuclear dangers.

4. In May 2000, at the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the States parties to that Treaty agreed, inter alia, on certain practical steps for the systematic and progressive efforts on nuclear disarmament, which constitute concrete benchmarks for evaluating progress in this field. Furthermore, the States parties unanimously agreed that the elimination of nuclear weapons is the only absolute guarantee against the use or threat of use of such weapons.

5. The challenge ahead for the international community is to see these steps through to their earliest and full implementation at all levels. Despite the political commitments made, the level of international cooperation in disarmament remains lower than it could and should be. The persistence of divergent views on the most pressing issues on the international disarmament agenda has once again affected the work of the Conference on Disarmament this year.

6. Several multilateral agreements still await either their entry-into-force or their effective implementation and their universality. There is also concern about the future of some important arms control and disarmament agreements. Progress can only be made if measures taken at the unilateral and bilateral levels towards nuclear disarmament are aimed at strengthening the global security environment. The Secretary-General notes the Joint Statement made by the Russian Federation and the United States of America on 22 July 2001 regarding upcoming consultations on strategic issues, in which the two countries expressed their intention to commence intensive consultations on the interrelated subjects of offensive and defensive systems.

7. Five years ago, on 24 September 1996, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty was opened for signature. At present, however, prospects for near-term entry into force of the Treaty remain uncertain, despite the impressive fact that 161 States have signed the Treaty and 79 have ratified it, including 31 of the 44 States whose ratification is specifically required for the Treaty to become effective. The Secretary-General hopes that the Conference on Facilitating the Entry Into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, which is scheduled to take place from 25 to 27 September 2001 in New York, will underscore the importance of that Treaty and generate renewed efforts for its earliest entry into force. He reiterates his call on all States that have not yet done so to sign and ratify the Treaty without delay and without conditions. Pending the entry into force of the Treaty, it is essential that a moratorium on nuclear-weapon-test explosions or any other nuclear explosions be upheld.

8. The Secretary-General also notes the deliberations and the proposals put forward, in particular, on paragraphs 3 and 4 of resolution 55/33 C, by delegations in the Conference on Disarmament.